GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

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NOTE TO TEACHERS: This is the first of the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS for the school year 1936-37. No BULLETINS were issued during summer vacation months. See important notice following Bulletin No. 2.

Photograph by J. Ortiz Echagüe

IN NORTHERN SPAIN, CALLING A SPADE A "TUNING FORK" SEEMS LOGICAL

Pocketed in the Pyrenees, the Basques have strange customs believed to have lasted 2,000 years with little change. Their history is as much a mystery as their language. The men bending over the strange spades above wear the familiar beret; the women, the white headdress of their ancestors (see Bulletin No. 1).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

The Geographic News Bulletins are published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers in the United States and its possessions for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (in stamps or money order); in Canada and other foreign countries, 50 cents. Entered as second-class matter, January 27, 1922, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized February 9, 1922.

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Spain—Country of Contrasts and Contradictions

"SPAIN will never be the same again!" lament her admirers, grieving over civil war.

Sameness, however, has never been typical of the southwestern arrowhead of Europe. Diversity of geography and reverses of history have conspired to make variety the keynote of this country of rich farms and barren plains, fair seacoasts and drab mountains, wealth and poverty, romance and realism.

Spain is, generally speaking, the loftiest European nation, with a higher average altitude even than soaring Switzerland. In fact, it has been called "the head of Europe—on Africa's shoulders." Once it was geographically joined to Africa, and still is only nine miles away at the Strait of Gibraltar.

Peninsula Shaped Like a Shield

Include Portugal for a moment, and the Iberian peninsula is shaped like a shield, symbol of the chivalry and militant gallantry for which the region was renowned long before Don Quixote began attacking windmills in behalf of kitchen maids.

A dozen mountain ranges divide the Spanish part of this shield into quarterings, each a distinctive realm, fiercely clannish and separate. In about 190,000 square miles (equal to twice the area of Oregon), Spain contains enough different "countries" and climates for a miniature continent (see map, next page).

Balanced between Europe and Africa, the shield of Spain has been decorated and defaced by both. From white North Africa most of the people's earliest ancestors are believed to have come, such as Berbers and Carthaginians, as well as the more recent strain of Arabic people called Moors because they crossed the water from Morocco. From Europe came leaders: kings and queens and generals from Austria, Italy, England, and France.

Most of Spain Is "on the Second Story"

Spain consists of a massive block of high mountain plateaus rising abruptly from a narrow rim of seacoast. Although the plateaus comprise five-sixths of the country, the seaside shelf holds most of the fertile land, large cities, and people. Communication between upper and lower "floors" is blocked by a ring of mountains.

Spain's extensive central plateau region is either sun-baked or frozen, for moderate weather is as rare as rain. On bleak plain and mountainside wander flocks of the famous merino sheep, outnumbering the human inhabitants. In the center flowers Madrid, as animated as its surroundings are somber. The provinces of New and Old Castile, Estremadura, Aragon, and Navarre have become famous in spite of the rigorous extremes of their location on Spain's "second story."

Southward lies what might be another country, bright with sub-tropical luxuriance, the languorous Andalusia. Here flourish trees and plants brought to Spain by the desert-haunted Moors—oranges, lemons, pomegranates, sugar cane, and the only bearing date palms in Europe. Here the rice yield per acre is the world's highest. Here and northward the cork oak produces in Spain a fourth of the world's cork crop.

Spain Leads in Olive Oil Production

Olive forests around Córdoba give the city its name—which means "oilpress"—and supply a large share of the olive oil output, with which Spain leads the world. Around Seville the olive crop is even larger.

Along the eastern-facing strip of coast are commercial centers like Barcelona, with its textile mills, chemical factories, and auto assembly plants. It could be called the Fruit and Nut Coast, because its well-irrigated crops include raisins, almonds, and oranges. Orange groves are so thick through southern and eastern Spain that every Spaniard could claim a whole tree for his personal use.

The northern coast is another "country" entirely. Atlantic breezes bring coolness to such summer resorts as San Sebastian and Santander, and bring rain to the green mountain pastures and fields of grain. The main occupations, however, are fishing, and the mining of iron, coal, and zinc, with the accompanying activities of iron foundries and shipbuilding (see illustration, inside cover).

Spain's most unusual metallic product is mercury. One mine in southern Spain brings forth about a third of the world's output annually.

The country's earlier history told a different story, for Spain was once the Mexico and

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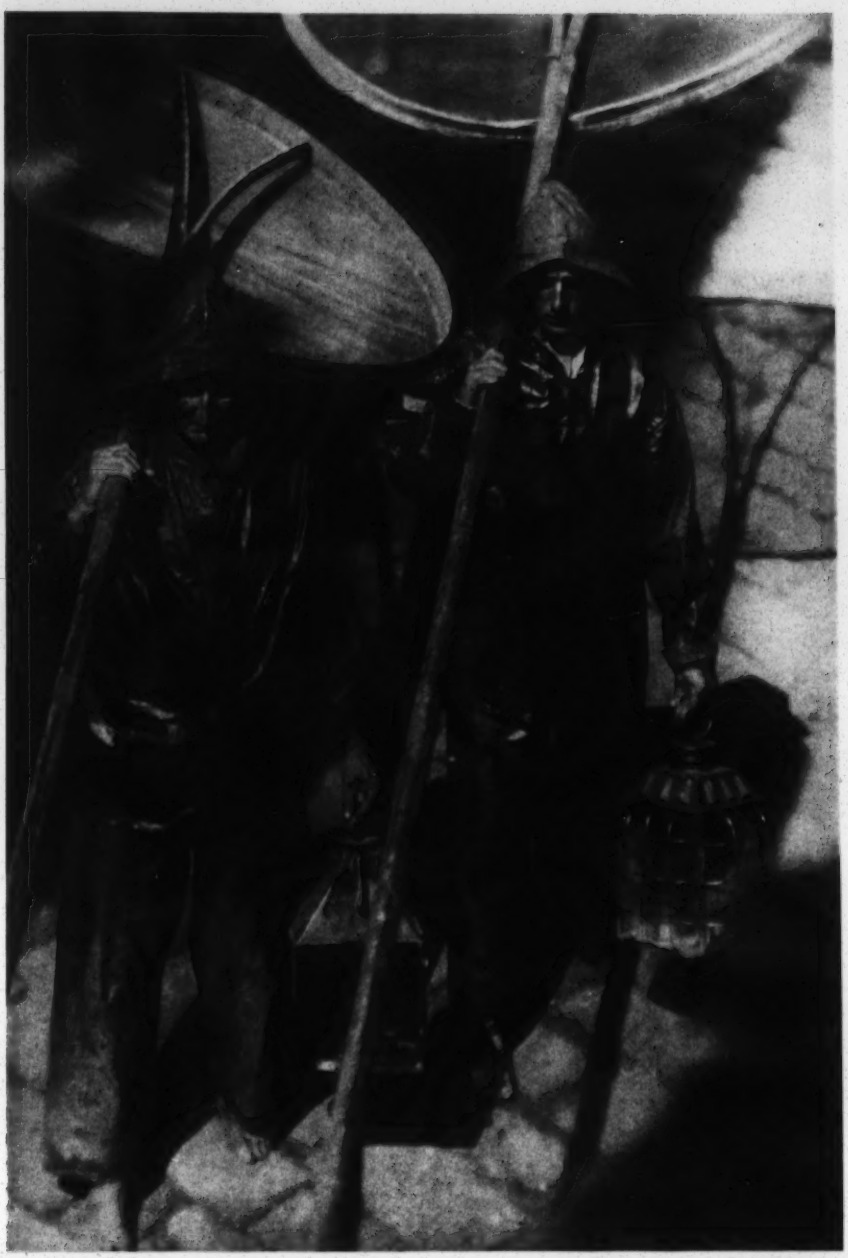

Photograph by J. Ortiz Echagüe

BAREFOOT BASQUES OF NORTHERN SPAIN USE LAMPLIGHT BAIT TO CATCH EELS

Basque fishermen light oil lamps along the quays at night and scoop up white eels two inches long, a popular delicacy when fried in olive oil. Farther west, fishermen of Galicia catch enough sardines to export them in cans by thousands of tons. The homeland of the Basques has been the scene of bitter fighting in the Spanish civil war (see Bulletin No. 1).

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Alaska, U. S. S. R., and Bering Sea, Scenes of N. G. S. Expeditions

FRONTIERS of knowledge were pushed back during the summer in the fields of astronomy, anthropology, and geography by the work of four National Geographic Society expeditions.

Two of The Society's groups have returned from the U.S.S.R., where they observed the sun's eclipse. Bradford Washburn brought back from the almost inaccessible Mt. McKinley region, in Alaska, a complete series of photographs of the highest territory under the American flag.

The fourth expedition, led by Henry B. Collins, Jr., in cooperation with the Smithsonian Institution, is still in the Bering Sea region of Alaska, seeking data from island village sites and early "kitchen middens" (dump heaps) to clear up the mystery as to whether the first Americans used this route to migrate into the Western Hemisphere from Siberia.

Sun-gazing Must Face the Hazard of Bad Weather

Of the two Russian expeditions, which made ten-thousand-mile trips for two minutes' observation of the sun's eclipse on June 19, one met that saddest of astronomers' fates—cloudy weather. The National Geographic Society-Georgetown University group, stationed at Kustanai, western Siberia, were forced by thick clouds and showers of rain to abandon the major part of their observation plans and to content themselves with checking by eye the exact instant of the eclipse's beginning, the period of totality, and the sun's emerging from eclipse.

This report is expected to be of value to the Naval Observatory in Washington, D. C., headquarters of accurate time in the United States.

At Ak Bulak, about 350 miles southwest of Kustanai, the eclipse was awaited by the National Geographic Society-U. S. Bureau of Standards Expedition, led by Dr. Irvine C. Gardner. The dawn of June 19 was thickly overcast. When the eclipse began, however, the eastern half of the sky was perfectly clear. It was possible for Dr. Gardner to take some exceptional photographs, both in black and white and in natural colors. For these he used a special astrographic camera of his own invention, with a lens tube only 14 feet long, an improvement over previous cameras which required tubes 75 to 100 feet long for the same purpose.

Eight of Dr. Gardner's pictures, taken during the 117 seconds of total eclipse, reveal the sun's corona with streamers of light extending hundreds of thousands of miles, and some over a million miles from the edge of the sun's disk. He developed the valuable negatives in Ak Bulak and brought them by hand to the United States. Prints will be made for publication in the *National Geographic Magazine.*

Highest Peak of North America Photographed from the Air

In July, both still and motion pictures were taken of North America's highest peak—Mt. McKinley, 20,300 feet in altitude—by Bradford Washburn, leader of the National Geographic Society's Mt. McKinley Expedition. In a series of four flights from the Pan American Airways base at Fairbanks, Alaska, Mr. Washburn succeeded in making a photographic survey from the air of this little-known mountain giant and also of the rugged terrain between Mt. McKinley and Mt. Hayes.

These pictures mark the first use, in the region, of infra-red photography.

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Peru of Mediterranean exploitation, yielding gold, silver, tin, and copper for the greater glory of Greece and the grandeur of ancient Rome. It was believed to be fabulously rich when Greek myth-makers wrote legends of Hercules venturing Spain-ward for the golden apples of Hesperides. To Tarshish, around Cádiz, King Solomon sent for gold for his temple.

Spanish Language Widely Spoken

Spain's world influence is reflected in the fact that the Spanish language is one of the four most widely spoken. It is the common tongue of most of South America, Central America, many West Indian islands, and parts of Africa. Yet, in parts of Spain, itself, different languages are used, such as Catalonian and Basque, instead of the official Castilian.

Note: Spain, whose Civil War has been occupying front-page space in the world's newspapers, is more fully described in the following: "Turbulent Spain," *National Geographic Magazine*, October, 1936; "Palette from Spain," March, 1936; "Montserrat, Spain's Mountain Shrine," January, 1933; "Madrid Out-of-Doors," August, 1931; "Pursuing Spanish Bypaths Northwest of Madrid," January, 1931; "Seville, More Spanish Than Spain," "On the Bypaths of Spain," and "Barcelona, Pride of the Catalans," March, 1929; "Balearics, Island Sisters of the Mediterranean," August, 1928; and "Adventurous Sons of Cádiz," also "From Granada to Gibraltar," August, 1924.

See also in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS: "Sitges—Playground of Spain's Catalonia," week of May 4, 1936; "Catalonia, the Workshop of Spain," week of October 29, 1934; "Granada Keeps Washington Irving's Memory Green," week of January 29, 1934; and "Toledo, Spain, Names Street for American Namesake," week of December 4, 1933.

Bulletin No. 1, October 5, 1936.

Drawn by A. H. Bumstead

POISED BETWEEN TWO CONTINENTS, SPAIN SHARES TRAITS OF BOTH

"Africa begins at the Pyrenees," say the French, to explain their differences from their Spanish neighbors. Mountain ranges in Spain—northern, central, and southern—have hampered travel so seriously that the railroad mileage of Spain, in proportion to area, is only a fourth as great as Switzerland's.

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Another Gap Closed on the Highroad to Buenos Aires

IN THE United States so many new highways are opened every year that little attention is paid to them, except locally.

South of the Rio Grande, however, modern roads are still somewhat of a novelty, and they are of more than local importance when they are part of the Inter-American, or Pan American, Highway—the longest road project in the world.

It was fitting, therefore, that Vice-President Garner of the United States, and prominent Mexican officials, should join in the festivities, July 1, that marked the official opening of the 760-mile section connecting the American border at Laredo, Texas, with the capital of Mexico. News dispatches report that some 4,000 American motorcars used the new road in the first two months of operation.

Proposed at Conference in 1923

Considered more of a dream than a possibility when it was proposed at the Fifth International Conference of American States in 1923, the Inter-American has captured the imagination of government officials, business interests, and many private citizens in the twelve Latin American republics through which it would pass on its 9,000-mile journey from Washington to Buenos Aires. Since then, it has been proposed to extend the roadway north through Canada to Alaska, and to send out feeder roads to every part of North and South America.

In 1934 the U. S. Congress gave the project a boost by appropriating $1,000,000 to enable us to cooperate with Latin American nations in surveying and constructing the more difficult sections. Last year President Roosevelt gave another $340,000 to Panama, Honduras, and Guatemala for three bridges.

Meanwhile each of the nations through which the main highway will pass has been adding a few miles here and a few there, halting at canyons or jungles that presented too many engineering difficulties to be overcome with limited funds. Air passengers in Latin America can look down on many scattered sections of modern road, already being used by motor cars and trucks as well as mules, oxen, llamas, and natives afoot.

Modern Roadway Ends at Tehuacán, Mexico

Pioneering American motor tourists have driven their cars to Mexico, D. F., and beyond as far as Tehuacán, a small city 165 miles south of the Mexican capital. The Mexican Government is planning this year to begin construction on the next link to Oaxaca. Guatemala has completed its share of the Inter-American Highway with passable, if unpaved, roadway. El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama have each improved scattered sections. So confident is Nicaragua that it will soon be linked with the outside world by highway that a modern hotel, claimed to be the largest in Central America, is being built in Managua.

Recent surveys show, in fact, that about a third of the total length of 12,000 miles between Alaska and Argentina is already usable by motor cars in all weather and more than half the Inter-American highway is passable in dry weather. The three most difficult breaks, where virtually no road, other than donkey trails, now exists, are (1) southern Mexico between Oaxaca and the Guatemalan border; (2) lower Panama and western Colombia; and (3) southern Ecuador.

In South America motor cars have already been driven across Argentina, and also from Santiago, Chile, up the west coast as far as northern Peru. Jumping

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This makes possible a photograph showing the town of Fairbanks, nearby, and the white summits of Mt. McKinley, and its related peaks, projecting above the horizon more than a hundred miles away across a haze-obscured plain.

Infra-red photographs show why Mt. McKinley can claim one of the greatest heights, from top to bottom, among the world's mountains, since it rises 20,000 feet from a level plain almost without foothills. Mt. Everest, although 29,000 feet above sea level, actually rises only about 10,000 feet above a lofty plateau region.

Mr. Washburn's photographs prove conclusively the location of Mt. Hunter, a peak over 15,000 feet high, about which accurate information has been so scarce that its very existence had been denied.

Note: Some of the more recent expeditions in which the National Geographic Society has participated are described in the following articles: "Down Idaho's River of No Return," *National Geographic Magazine*, July, 1936; "Exploring Yukon's Glacial Stronghold," June, 1936; Man's Farthest Aloft," January, 1936; "Exploring the Ice Age in Antarctica," October, 1935; "Half Mile Down," December, 1934; "Exploring the Stratosphere," October, 1934; "Journey by Jungle Rivers to the Home of the Cock-of-the-Rock," November, 1933; "From the Mediterranean to the Yellow Sea by Motor," November, 1932; "Photographing the Eclipse of 1932 from the Air," November, 1932; "Mapping the Antarctic from the Air," October, 1932; and "Conquest of Antarctica by Air," August, 1930.

Bulletin No. 2, October 5, 1936.

A Gift to Education—How Teachers May Cooperate

THE GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS are a gift of the National Geographic Society to education. This is the first issue of 30 numbers, each containing five illustrated Bulletins, to be mailed weekly during the current school year. The Bulletins report the geography of recent events of world importance.

Because these Bulletins represent a substantial gift to schools from The Society's educational fund, the expense of advertising or circulation promotion cannot be undertaken as would be the case with a commercial publication. The Society must rely upon supervisory officials and teachers to call them to the attention of their colleagues who might use them effectively. This should be done promptly so that applicants may be put upon the mailing list to receive the early issues.

The following order form may be used:

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Many subscriptions expire with this issue. No further notice of expiration will be sent. Former subscribers are requested to renew promptly, otherwise files will be incomplete, as back numbers cannot be supplied. Each subscription from applicants in the United States or its possessions should be accompanied by 25 cents to cover mailing costs; in Canada and other foreign countries, 50 cents. There is no other charge.

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"Fire ! Fire !"—Can the Cry Die Down?

PRIMITIVE man's friend—fire—soon taught him the evil of too much of a good thing. It can also burst the cage of civilization, leaping up as a Frankenstein's monster of terror, torture, and destruction.

In the United States alone the annual fire loss is estimated at no less than $250,000,000—half the amount spent on public high schools. About 10,000 men, women and children yearly lose their lives to fire.

Seeing Nero despised because he only fiddled while Rome burned, thoughtful men for centuries have devised schemes for fighting fire. One of these is the annual Fire Prevention Week, observed this year beginning October 4.

French Town Has Had No Fire for 600 Years

The truly modern method of fighting a fire "puts it out" before it starts. Benjamin Franklin, who has become a sort of patron "saint" of fire tamers, might have added to his *Almanac*, "An ounce of prevention is worth a gallon of extinguishment."

Two centuries ago Franklin praised Paris for building houses "in a manner more secure from danger of fire," with stone staircases in stone houses under tile or slate roofs. Paris still has little more than half as many fires as modern Detroit, Michigan. Ahun, little town of two thousand in central France, claims a record of no fire for 600 years.

The fireproof building, to be a fortress against fire within itself and in its neighborhood, needs steel and concrete construction, brick or stone, and metal instead of wood around doors and windows. Modern materials have been added to these—asbestos fabrics, wire-mesh glass, glass bricks, and wood treated for fire-resistance.

If fires cannot be put out of the realm of possibility, at least they can be put out. One finds the hand extinguisher's red or brass cylinder dotting the walls of many older schools, apartment houses, and public buildings. Invert it, and it is transformed into a miniature fire engine in your very hands. A stopper drops from its concealed bottle of sulphuric acid, converting a sodium bicarbonate solution into salt, gas, and water. Presto! the gas forces the water forth, and the blaze is drowned.

Fires Which Extinguish Themselves

Fires can even be forced to put themselves out. Many buildings are studded with sprinklers, which automatically spray their surroundings with water as soon as fire creates enough heat to melt their soft metal plugs or lift their small quartz stoppers. Some sprinklers can also send out S.O.S. calls by telegraph if they are out of order.

Fires, like tigers, are most easily tamed when very young. To remove the alarm from the hands of chance, fire has been taught to tell on itself. A hollow wire of copper, concealed in the walls of a room, can detect the heat from flames in a trash basket and signal firemen to extinguish them before a person in an adjoining room is aware of the danger. These metal watch-dogs are sniffing for fire in numerous art galleries, museums, banks, warehouses, libraries, laundries, and historic shrines like the restored colonial buildings of Williamsburg, Virginia; the White House, and the National Archives Building in Washington, D. C. The secret of their sensitivity is that the air in their "veins" is expanded by a small rise in heat and puffs out a tiny diaphragm in a concealed box. The diaphragm closes an electrical circuit which flashes the alarm to a central station.

Minute Men of the Revolution are succeeded by the Half-Minute Men of the modern fire department. They can be rolling firewards on a speeding truck in less time than it takes to tell about it. Fire engines are adapted to every need. At Lake, Wisconsin, where little water is readily available, the fire truck carries its own—2,500 gallons—directly to the fire. Fires along waterfronts, formerly fought with engines on scows towed into position, are now attacked with speedy fire boats.

Seaplane That Fights Fires

Canadian railways have fire engines and water tanks mounted on flat cars. Many cities use small engines with chemical tanks instead of water. The airport of San Diego, California, has a seaplane fire engine!

The tribe of paid firemen has increased until New York City alone has 7,000, enough to populate a town. Paid fire brigades developed in England after the Great Fire of London in 1666. That disaster, when London blazed for three days, proved the inadequacy of leather

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to central Ecuador, there is a dry weather road extending northward into Colombia, with a branch running eastward into Venezuela as far as Caracas and La Guaira.

With the money made available by Congress, the U. S. Bureau of Public Roads, aided by highway engineers of the Central American countries, has made a survey that not only indicates the most practical route for the Highway, but also points out that a road through Central America would penetrate regions that could supply the United States with such needed things as rice, coffee, cinnamon, camphor, quinine, rubber, copra, vegetable oils, gums, hemp, etc.

To pay for a completed Inter-American road, various plans are advanced, including local gasoline taxes, road and bridge tolls, concessions, and outright gifts by nations along the route. More than likely, if and when all surveys are finished, the United States will be asked to take the lead in some form of international agreement for financing the project.

Note: Additional information and photographs about some of the countries traversed by the Inter-American Highway can be found in "Guatemala Interlude," *National Geographic Magazine*, October, 1936; "Travels with a Donkey in Mexico," December, 1934; "Glamour of Mexico—Old and New," March, 1934; "Life on the Argentine Pampa," October, 1933; "Flying the 'Hump' of the Andes," May, 1931; "Flying the World's Longest Air-Mail Route," March, 1930; "Buenos Aires to Washington by Horse," February, 1929; and "How Latin America Looks from the Air," October, 1927.

See also in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS: "Uncle Sam Signs New Lease with Landlord Panama," week of March 23, 1936; "Peru Celebrates Its 400th Birthday," week of January 28, 1935; "El Salvador, and Its Capital, San Salvador," week of February 19, 1934; and "New Link in South America's Longest Highway," week of October 23, 1933.

About half of the highway route can be traced on the map showing Mexico, Central America, the West Indies, and northern South America, issued as a supplement to the *National Geographic Magazine* of December, 1934. Additional copies of this map can be obtained, postage paid, for 50 cents (paper), and 75 cents (linen).

Bulletin No. 3, October 5, 1936.

© *Branson De Cou from Galloway*

GOAL OF THE WORLD'S LONGEST ROAD PROJECT

The Capitol at Buenos Aires will be the southern terminus when the Inter-American Highway is completed. The projected route of the highway passes through twelve Latin American countries south of the Rio Grande.

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Loen Lake Again a Setting for Norwegian Tragedy

NORWAY'S fjords seem as old as time. Yet geography is still in the making there. Last month an avalanche, loosening a million tons of rock, roared down the mile-high cliffs that tower over Lake Loen, in mountainous west-central Norway.

The giant wave that followed was reported to be as high as the Capitol building in Washington. It swept across the lake at express train speed, taking a toll of more than 70 lives and nearly wiping out two villages. Livestock was drowned and a small steamer washed high up on the shore.

An extension of a chain of waterways leading inland from Nord Fjord, Loen Lake is no stranger to disaster. Many inhabitants of the region recall a similar tragedy in 1905, when 61 persons lost their lives. In 1934, nearly 50 persons were drowned by giant waves set up in the same manner at Tafjord, a few miles to the northeast of Loen Lake.

Stone-Ringed Fingers of Water

Loen Lake is famed among travellers and anglers as one of the most beautiful of many long, narrow, stone-ringed fingers of water that indent the rugged, mountainous coastline of western Norway. A barrier of broken rock separates it from the main fjord and the sea, raising its level to a height of some 289 feet above sea level.

Visitors and fishermen generally approach it by boat, landing at the village of Loen, at the head of Invikfjord. From here they follow a modern road, paralleling a rushing stream that serves as an outlet to Lake Loen, to the lake itself.

Meadows, lush and green, along the shore soon give way to a strip of firs and beeches. Above them soar sheer rocky heights, topped by snow-clad peaks and glaciers. The scenery is grand and impressive, and scores of beetling precipices, dashing waterfalls, and islets seem to pass in review as the lake steamer plows along, leaving rippling furrows on the pale green surface of the water.

Spectacular Ice and Water Falls

The lake itself is about 10 miles long. Except for a few knifelike ravines, it is entirely surrounded by huge precipices nearly 5,000 feet high, with mountain peaks towering another 1,000 to 1,500 feet above the clifftops. Between many of the peaks huge glaciers descend, but all of them melt into waterfalls before they reach the lake (see illustration, next page). When clouds hang low in the region these falls seem to drop out of the mist.

One of the most spectacular sights in western Norway is a glacier which breaks off from the brow of a tall cliff on the western shore of the lake. In summer large masses of ice are detached, plunging a sheer 3,900 feet with a rumble like thunder, to dash to pieces among the rocks at the water's edge. Often ice fragments are spread out in a great fan-shaped pile below.

Most impressive of the lake's rock walls is the steep, serrated face of Ravnefjeld, source of the avalanches that caused both the 1905 and the recent disasters. Near the southeast end of the lake, this stern 6,575-foot cliff faces three of the principal hamlets of the region and a number of scattered *gaards,* or homesteads, whose inhabitants sometimes do not see the sun at all during the winter months. Here the lake is very narrow and deep.

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buckets for water-tossing, axes, ladders, and metal hooks mounted on long rods for pulling down burning walls.

The red steam engine, belching smoke and cinders from the brass mouth of its upright, milk-bottle-shaped boiler, drawn by plunging horses and followed by its rattling little red coal cart, was the symbol of excitement in both England and the United States after 1860. It established dramatic traditions still recalled with sentimental tears by confirmed fire-chasers and retired firemen. The faithfulness of the horses became legendary. When Chicago installed motor-driven equipment, a fire alarm was turned in to get the horses out of the fire house to make way for the new engine.

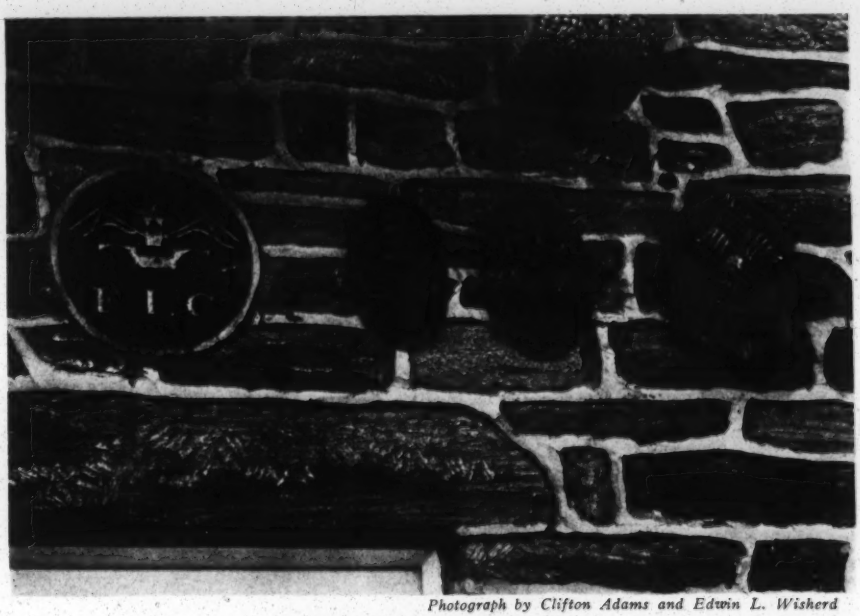
"Saviors of Adjoining Property"

Volunteer firemen have their traditions, too. The Union Fire Company of Philadelphia, organized at Franklin's suggestion 200 years ago, combined service with fun; its eight annual business meetings were as concerned with a good supper as with business. Members provided six leather water buckets each and two canvas bags for carrying property from burning buildings.

Many towns once required every citizen, unless exempt by profession or disability, to dash to the scene of fire for service at the hand pumper. Affection for the engine was crystallized in such names as the "White Angel" and the "Lily of the Swamp." The firemen had mottoes like "Veni Vidi Vici" and "We'll Try," but sometimes were jokingly dubbed "saviors of adjoining property."

Note: The following issues of the *National Geographic Magazine* contain illustrations and text material about fires, fire prevention, and fire-fighting equipment: "New York—An Empire within a Republic," November, 1933; "New Jersey Now!" May, 1933; "Washington, the Evergreen State," February, 1933; "The Historic City of Brotherly Love," December, 1932; "Tokyo Today," February, 1932; "The Home of the First Farmer in America (Mount Vernon)," May, 1928; "The Story of the Horse," November, 1923; and "The Automobile Industry," October, 1923.

Bulletin No. 4, October 5, 1936.



Photograph by Clifton Adams and Edwin L. Wisherd

PASSPORTS TO FIRE PROTECTION

Early fire insurance companies placed fire-mark plaques, like these in Philadelphia, on policy holders' houses as a "go-to-work" sign for their paid squads of smoke-eaters; otherwise, the private firemen were forbidden to fight the fire. The Fire Insurance Company's insignia on the left depicts a primitive engine, with hand pumping racks. The tree represents a company organized to insure houses previously rejected by other companies because surrounded by trees. The clasped hands on the wooden shield at the right form the fire mark of the country's oldest fire insurance company, the Hand-in-Hand, organized in 1752 at Benjamin Franklin's suggestion, and still in operation. Similar plaques are seen on old houses in Baltimore, Washington, and other cities.

Scars of the 1905 avalanche, when a stupendous crag detached itself and plunged into the lake, can still be seen (see illustration, below). This slide was recalled by a memorial stone on a low rock by the lake.

Villages Almost Destroyed

The villages of Noesdal and Boedal, which last month were reported virtually destroyed, hug the shore not far from the Ravnefjeld, and again felt the full force of the giant waves set up by the tons of rock hurled into the water. Many of the houses had been moved up the shore since the 1905 catastrophe, but still not far enough to escape the waves of September 13.

Principal industries of this lonely region are fishing and catering to summer visitors. The villages are ideal headquarters for mountain climbers who wish guides for the ascent of the many peaks and glaciers above the lake. Trout and salmon are abundant.

Note: Norway (including Loen Lake) and its people are described in "Life in a Norway Valley," *National Geographic Magazine*, May, 1935; "Norway, a Land of Stern Reality," July, 1930; and "Norway and the Norwegians," June, 1924.

See also in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS: "The Vikings, Merchants of the Middle Ages," week of March 18, 1935; and "Norwegian Fjord Swept by 'Rock-Made' Waves," week of April 30, 1934.

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LOEN LAKE IS AN IDYLLIC SPOT BETWEEN AVALANCHES

Across the lake can be seen the huge scar left by the disaster of 1905, when a massive crag fell into the lake, setting up waves that took 61 lives and swept farmhouses, cattle, and horses to destruction. What chance, for instance, would the horses and dwellings in the foreground have if struck by a 300-foot wall of water, such as was reported following the landslide last month from the same cliff? The photograph shows a waterfall tumbling down from a glacier on the snow-capped peak in the left background.

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